

Avoiding Run-Ons**ACADEMIC VOCABULARY**

run-on sentence: a written thought or bunch of thoughts consisting of two or more sentences written as if they were one; words that fail to show where one idea ends and another begins.

end mark: punctuation that separates one sentence from another, by ending a complete thought

comma: shows a slight pause, and avoids confusion, but *does not* signal the end to one thought and the start of another.

Step 1: Read your writing aloud to find natural pauses. A pause to end a sentence comes at the end of one thought, before another thought begins. If there is no end mark where you made the pause, you may have written a run-on sentence.

EXAMPLE: RUN-ON

Soccer is the most popular sport in the world today it is my favorite team sport.

Step 2: To correct a run-on sentence, add the missing end mark and start a new sentence. In the example group of words, readers naturally pause after the word *today* and before the word *it*. There are *two* distinct ideas before and after the pause.

EXAMPLE: REVISION

Soccer is the most popular sport in the world today. It is my favorite team sport.

EXAMPLE: RUN-ON

Soccer games feature fast action, millions of people enjoy playing and watching the sport.

Step 4: Choose corrections that, either link related ideas, or separate ideas. Choose one of the following methods.

- To link closely related thoughts, add a conjunction (*and, but, for, or, so*) after the comma.
- To connect related thoughts, replace the comma with a semicolon (;).
- To separate distinct ideas, replace the comma with an end mark, and start a new sentence.

EXAMPLES

- Soccer games feature fast action; millions of people enjoy playing and watching the sport.
- Soccer games feature fast action, **so** millions of people enjoy playing and watching the sport.
- Soccer games feature fast action. **Millions** of people enjoy playing and watching the sport.